

ESEA Information Update

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Topic: Overview of Parent Involvement Requirements in NCLB

Introduction

The reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, requires schools to involve parents in school programs and in the education of their children. The major NCLB parent involvement requirements for schools and districts are addressed in this document and are organized in the following manner:

Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

1. Parent Involvement Policy for Schools and Districts
2. District Parent Involvement Policy
3. School Obligations
4. School-Parent Compact
5. School and District Responsibilities for Building Capacity for Parent Involvement
6. Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs)

Title II, Part D—Enhancing Education through Technology

Title III—Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students

Title IV—21st Century Schools

1. Part A: Safe and Drug-Free School Activities
2. Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Title V, Part A—Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs

(For parent **notification** requirements in NCLB, see DPI ESEA Information Update Bulletin No. 03.03).

Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

1. Parent Involvement Policy for Schools and Districts

Every district and every school using Title I funds must develop jointly with parents of children participating in Title I programs a written parent involvement policy. Parents must agree to the policy, and the district must distribute the policy to parents and the community. Schools or districts may amend current parent involvement policies that involve all parents to meet the following new requirements.

2. District Parent Involvement Policy

The parent involvement policy must detail ways the district will:

- Involve parents in developing district school improvement plans.
- Offer technical assistance and coordination to help schools plan parent involvement activities to improve student and school academic performance.
- Build school and parent capacities for strong parent involvement.
- Coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies with other programs, such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and limited English proficiency programs.
- Annually evaluate with parents the effectiveness of the policy in academically improving district schools. The evaluation must include identification of barriers to parent involvement, especially barriers to parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or belong to a racial or ethnic minority. Districts must revise the policy if necessary.

Districts may establish parent advisory councils to provide advice on parent involvement programs. They also may work with community-based organizations and businesses to develop parent involvement activities.

Districts receiving more than \$500,000 in Title I funds must use at least one percent of those funds for parent involvement activities. Parents of children served by Title I should help decide how funds are spent.

3. School Obligations

Each school using Title I funds must write a parent involvement policy jointly developed with, agreed to, and distributed to Title I parents. The policy must be made available to the community and updated periodically.

The school also must:

- Conduct an annual meeting for Title I parents to inform them about the policy, their rights under Title I, and how they can be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs in the school, including development of this policy.
- Provide parents with timely information about Title I school programs, school curriculum, assessments used by the school to measure student achievement, and proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
- Respond quickly to parent requests for opportunities to meet regularly and participate in decisions about the education of their children.
- If parents are dissatisfied with the school's Title I program plans, include parent comments in the report to the school district.

4. School-Parent Compact

The school-parent involvement policy must describe how the school will develop jointly with parents a school-parent compact for all children served by Title I. The compact must outline how students, parents, and staff will share responsibility for improved student achievement and how parents and the school will build and develop partnerships to achieve state expectations for student achievement. The compact must describe:

- The school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive learning environment.
- Parents' responsibility for supporting children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering at school; participating in decisions about their children's education, and positive use of time outside of school.
- The importance of ongoing parent-teacher communication, including elementary schools' plans to offer at least one annual parent-teacher conference to discuss the parent-teacher compact and all schools' plans to report children's progress frequently to parents and communicate how parents can contact staff, volunteer in their children's classrooms, and observe classroom activities.

5. School and District Responsibilities for Building Capacity for Parent Involvement

As part of efforts to improve student achievement, each school and district receiving Title I funds will implement the following practices to build school capacity for parent involvement:

- Help parents understand state and local assessment of their children's progress and how to monitor progress and work with educators.
- Provide parents with materials and training to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and use of technology.
- Educate teachers, administrators, and other school staff about the value of and methods of reaching out to parents as equal partners.
- Integrate parent involvement efforts with other school and community programs, including Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, and Parents as Teachers Programs.
- Ensure that information about school and parent programs is in a format and language parents can understand.

The following practices may be implemented at school and district discretion:

- Involve parents in developing training for teachers, principals, and other educators.
- Use Title I funds to provide literacy training if all other funding is exhausted.
- Use Title I funds to pay expenses associated with parent involvement, including transportation, child care, and training fees.
- Train parents to help involve other parents.
- Arrange parent-educator meetings at various times in school or at other locations to maximize parent participation.
- Adopt model approaches to improving parent involvement.
- Establish a district parent advisory council.
- Involve community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.
- Upon request, provide reasonable support for parent involvement activities.

Schools and districts should provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, disabilities, and those who are migrants in languages they can understand.

6. Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs)

Schools and districts must inform parents of the existence and purpose of parental information and resource centers to provide training, information, and support to parents and those who

work with parents, districts, and schools. Wisconsin's PIRC is Parents Plus of Wisconsin, Susan Werley, Director, 105 High Street, Neenah, WI 54956 or www.parentspluswi.org.

For more information

More information about school and district parent involvement requirements in Title I, Part A, including examples of school policy and building capacity, is available at the U.S. Department of Education website at www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/Title_I/parinv.html#policy.

Title II, Part D—Enhancing Education through Technology

School districts applying for Title II, Part D, funds must have in place a process for effective use of technology to promote parent involvement and increase home-school communication. The process must include efforts to regularly inform parents about technology used in the educational program.

For more information

A brief summary of Title II, Part D, provisions in NCLB is available at the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/tiisummary.html#anchorD.

Title III— Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students

School districts using Title III funds must implement an effective means of outreach to parents of limited English proficient children. The outreach must inform parents how they can be involved in their children's education and be active participants in helping their children learn English and achieve academically. Outreach shall include holding, and sending notices of opportunities for, regularly scheduled meetings with parents of LEP children to formulate and respond to parent recommendations.

For more information

A summary of major NCLB provisions on language instruction for limited English proficient students is available at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/tiisummary.html#anchorA.

Title IV—21st Century Schools

1. Part A: Safe and Drug-Free School Activities

Districts that receive safe and drug-free school funds must inform and involve parents in violence and drug abuse prevention programs and activities. Schools should make reasonable efforts to inform parents of the content of such programs or activities. If a parent submits a written request, the school must withdraw a student from the program or activity.

The district must have “meaningful and ongoing” input from parents in developing drug and violence prevention activities and should work to promote the involvement of parents in these activities.

For more information

An information update on safe and drug-free schools is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/bul_0205.html.

2. Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

A school district, private school, or community-based organization using Title IV funds to operate a 21st Century Community Learning Center should meaningfully involve parents in the development and administration of the center, for example, as members of the site council or advisory council that oversees center operation.

Schools or community-based organizations using Title IV funds to operate a 21st Century Community Learning Center must inform parents of the services available for students and family members. The school or organization also must inform parents about the results of evaluations of the center.

For more information

More information about Community Learning Centers is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/sspwc/clc.html.

Title V, Part A—Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs

School districts receiving Title V funds under Part A, Innovative Programs, must systematically consult with parents of elementary and secondary students attending district schools on the spending of these funds and in planning, designing, and implementing innovative assistance programs.

For more information

A summary of major NCLB provisions for Title V is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/tvsummary.html.